AU CIEL.

In the early spring a party of three of us started for a Continental ramble of a few months.

Our party consisted of my father and mother and myself, a boy of a little over sixteen, just recovered from an attack of measles, which had pulled me down considerably, and rendered some change on my account desirable. After a brief council held it was decided to go to Colmar. I forget the name of the hotel where we put up; but we did not like it; I do recollect, however, that pestilential odors, especially at night, led us, after three days' endurance, to conclude we must try and secure other quarters.

My mother had an aversion to hotels and hotel life; and, thinking there must be such things as lodgings to be had, she took me out with her in quest of one.

Madam Bertrand, a very pleasant woman, and quite a lady in manner received us; and on hearing our errand, and being told how many we were in family, said she thought she could take us in, and though not in the habit of letting lodging, and so forth, she would do her best to make us very comfortable.

Though we were quite unexpected, the house was in order, and in point of cleanliness presenting a marked contrast with the quarters we were leaving. The rooms were well furnished, and the look-out upon the promenade or boulevard delightful. The rent asked for the accommodation we wanted was ridiculously low; so my mother at once concluded the transaction, and it was arranged that we should bring our things and take up our abode there the next morning.

We did not see Monsieur Bertrand; but in one of the rooms shown us we found a young lady playing the piano, who, on our entering, rose to greet us with that easy grace which characterizes, certainly, the better classes of the French. She appeared to be about my own age, perhaps a trifle older, very nice-looking, and reminded my mother and myself of a sister of mine we had lost some two years previously.

The Bertrands were a superior sort of people. They would, I suppose, have ranked among an upper middle-class, though in point of manner and nice feeling they were gentlefolk all over. Theophile was an only daughter, and as such was, naturally, thought an immense deal of by both father and mother; while her having no brothers or sisters, and consequently so much the companion of her parents, rendered her more of the woman than most girls of her age. My mother took a great fancy to her, a circumstance which seemed by no means disagreeable to the father and mother. My parents were in the habit of taking a country walk daily, in which I used to accompany them. Theophile was asked to join us, which she generally did; and I remember, when anything chanced to prevent her coming with us, the afternoon walk or the evening stroll was not, to me, somehow, at all the same thing. Theophile was musical, and played the piano with some execution. I had learned the piano also; and although she was far the better performer of the two, I was quite up to the mark of taking the bass part of a duet; and many a pleasant hour was whiled away over some of Schulhoff's or Thalberg's compositions. Being so frequently thrown together, it would be no matter of surprise that an intimacy, and a rather close one, should spring up between us; among all my fair young acquaintances, there was no one like Theophile. She liked me too, I persuaded myself: her expressive eyes said as much, though she did not actually tell me so in words. There were those, too, beside myself, young French fellows, some older than I, who found Theophile an attractive girl. They used to call, and she seemed to be on very friendly terms with some of them, which I did not like at all; and I remember feeling by no means happy one afternoon when I saw Theophile and one of those young visitors walk out together; how I took note of the time they were gone, and speculated, though I had too much pride to ask her the question, where or how the three hours could have passed that they were absent. So annoyed was I indeed, absurd youth that I was, that I kept out of the way and would not see her when in the course of the evening she came into our sitting room. I had, however, recovered myself in the course of the next day, and we were as amicable as ever.

Among the visitors to the house was one whom I very soon perceived to be no friend of mine. This was a priest, one Pere Jacques. He would come into the room where I was and pretend not to see me. He would ridicule England and English ways in my presence. If I met him in the street, which occasionally I did, he would pass me without the slighest recognition. This was shown almost from the first, and yet I had given him no offence whatever, and for some time I was unable to account for his animosity. He was frequently at the house, and I was continually coming across him; and it has annoyed me greatly to see the influence he appeared to have over the Bertrands. I had abstained, however, from referring to Father Jacques's behavior to me, and indeed should never have mentioned the man's name to the family, but for a little matter that occurred, and rendered some allusion to him almost unavoidable. One afternoon when Monsieur Bertrand had, as usual, gone to his office, and Madame was out shopping, Theophile happened to be left home alone.

'Is Theophile coming out with us today?' inquired my mother.

'I do not know,' I replied. 'I will go and ask her?' I accordingly went up stairs, and, as was my habit, tapped gently at the door of the room where I generally found her. There was, however, no answer to my gentle knock; it had not been heard. I did not knock a second time, assuming the room was empty, but opened the door and stepped in. Not a little surprised was I at what I saw. Here were Father Jacques and Theophile by themselves. They were both seated. He had hold of her left hand, and, bending forward from his seat, was looking up in Theophile's face, addressing her with the utmost *empressement*, while Theophile, with her face averted and her right hand shading, as it were, her eyes, was evidently profoundly affected by what the priest was saying to her, looking down upon the floor, silent. I, of course, apologized for this intrusion, and at once withdrew, and a few minutes after, I heard Father Jacques's footsteps on the stairs, and from the window, I saw him walk away.

'Is Theophile not coming?' again asked my mother.

'No, I think not, this afternoon.' I felt strongly inclined to let my mother know what I had just witnessed upstairs; but some indescribable feeling restrained me from doing so. She, however, seemed to suspect something, probably from my manner, and she added, 'I hope nothing has gone wrong: I mean that there has been no little tiff between Theophile and you.'

'Oh, dear no!' I replied. 'We could not be better friends.' I thought it just to add that I had found Theophile and Father Jacques together.

'Alone?'

'Yes; alone.' My mother said nothing, but I could see the circumstance set her a thinking. So it did me. I was puzzled, and something more, at what I had witnessed. What could Pere Jacques have been saying to Theophile? Could it be upon religious matters that this priest—odious fellow, as I thought him—was lecturing her? Could it have anything to do with the confessional? Then, too, what business had he to be holding her hand? How I longed to see the girl! But, then, would the mystery be cleared up by her when I did?

'Good-morning, Theophile! We missed you in our walk, yesterday,' were my first words to her the next day, as I entered the same room where I had now heard her playing overhead.

'Ah, good-morning; so glad to see you!' she replied, coloring just a little, but manifesting no confusion as she did so. 'You had a nice walk, I dare say. The day was charming!'

'I am afraid you must have thought me very ill-mannered yesterday, Theophile, in entering your room. But, do you know, I knocked as usual.'

'Did you knock? I did not hear you. But it did not signify.'

'I do not think Pere Jacques would have said it did not signify, Theophile; I do not like that Pere Jacques.'

'You do not like him? Have you, then, any reason for disliking him?'

'He dislikes me. I can see it.' At this remark Theophile seemed rather embarrassed, and after a moment's pause I summoned up courage to add: 'But I see he likes you.'

Theophile blushed; but, recovering herself quickly, she replied: 'So you have noticed that also, have you? Well, perhaps you are right. But tell me why you think he does not like you.'

'Oh! his manner shows it. You know his aversion to me. I wish you would tell me why he dislikes me so. I don't think he likes your being so much with us' (I did not like to say, with me). 'I am afraid I have let him see that I am—'

'That you are what? You must tell me.'

'Must I? Well, so fond of you.'

Here was my first confession. I had long wanted to make it in some form or other. Theophile had not given me the opportunity. I recollect, as if it had been but yesterday, how my voice shook as I disclosed what in all sincerity I felt toward her, and my cheek turned crimson.

Theophile colored too, deeply, on hearing this tender disclosure, and replied:

'Really! I cannot think what you have found in me that you should like me so. I am sure I ought to feel very happy.'

What would have delighted me to hear was some corresponding confession on her part; just a word, to let me see the feeling was mutual. But it came not, though I waited. However, I resumed:

'Theophile, answer me. Am I not right? Does not Pere Jacques think me very fond of you, and does he not dislike me on that account?'

'Not altogether. He has another reason, something like what you suspect! What can you mean? Do tell me.'

'I cannot. Not just now, at my rate. Perhaps, though, I may at some other time.'

I did not press it, but the feeling, I suppose, that in this Father Jacques I had a sort of rival and a decided foe, led me to return to the charge:

'Father Jacques is very often at your house, Theophile; what does he call so frequently for?'

'He is our priest.'

'Is he, then, obliged to call because he is your priest, and so often? Our clergyman at home does not call once in six months.'

'With Catholics it is different, I suppose.'

'But what can he have to talk about all the time? Such long visits as he pays! I wish you would tell me. Now, what was he saying to you yesterday?'

'I do not think I am quite at liberty to tell you.'

'Some secrets, then, I suppose, that you may not disclose.'

'No; no secrets that I should at all mind disclosing. My mother knows all about it.'

'Then why cannot you tell me? You did not seem pleased, I thought.'

'Probably not; but Father Jacques would not approve of my mentioning the matter.'

'Not to me?'

'Not to you; and yet I do not know why I should not tell you. He need never know that I have. Promise me not to reveal it if I tell you—will you?'

'Of course I will reveal nothing you communicate to me in confidence.'

'Well, the truth is, he is trying to persuade me to enter a convent.

'And are you going?' said I eagerly.'

'What an interest you appear to take in me!'

'Are you going to enter a convent? Do say.'

'I do not know. I do not desire it. I shall try and avoid doing so, but—'

'Theophile, you will think me very inquisitive; but what can Father Jacques's reason be for wanting to shut you up?'

'Oh he says it will be for my good. He declares I shall be much happier if I gave up the world and devote myself to the service of our holy Church. Besides which, he will be better able, he says, to attend to my spiritual interests.'

'How? Would he be in the convent, too?'

'He is connected with the convent he wishes me to join.'

'Oh, Theophile!, I exclaimed unable to suppress my concern and indignation, 'you make me very sad. How much I shall think of you after we have left Colmar I shall be wondering, when I am miles away, whether you have given in to that horrid man.'

'But you are not going away for some time yet, are you?'

'Yes, I am sorry to say, we expect my uncle next week, and we are to start for Switzerland, I think, the day after his arrival.'

Theophile was silent, disconcerted, evidently, at my allusion to our leaving. We continued talking together for some little time longer, not so cheerily by any means as usual; but before we separated, I again recurred, to the question I had asked her about Father Jacques.

'Before we part, tell me. Theophile—again I ask you—why is it Father Jacques dislikes me so? You said I had nearly guessed the reason.'

'No; I did not say that. You asked me whether it was because he thought you liked me, and I said that it was not the real reason, though something like it.'

'Well, then, what is the reason? I shall give you no peace till you tell me.'

'You are very persistent. Well, Father Jacques has suspicion that—he says, indeed, he is sure—that—'

'That what?' I broke in, all the more eager to hear what my young friend seemed reluctant to divulge. 'That what?'

'That I like you! There now you have it. Are you satisfied? Do not ask me any more,' and she threw herself back in her chair, and covered her face with her hands.

That was all I wanted. I was satisfied. There need be now no doubt that Theophile loved me, and I felt delighted. I had also got at the secret of this priest's dislike to me. Theophile was fond of me: he saw it, and it made him hate me. I afterward learned that this 'spiritual adviser,' as she styled him, in remonstrating with her parents, used to take his stand upon religous grounds, and dilate upon the peril of any intimacy being maintained—the irreparable mischief, indeed, that might ensue—between Theophile and one of a heretical creed like myself. But happily without effect. Her parents treated me with the same cordial courtesy, and the girl continued as nice in her behavior to me as ever. So the attachment that had sprung up between us went on without let or hindrance, the interference of this meddling priest notwithstanding. And thus, whether our mutal parents failed to see it, or seeing it, cared not to take notice of this intimacy, I know not; but it was so that Theophile and I, young things of sixteen and seventeen were suffered to become as attached to each other as any two lovers of maturer years could possibly have been. We had now passed three months at Colmar, and, as I had told Theophile, we were expecting my uncle in the course of a few days, when I was taken ill. Some form of a low fever, which had shown itself in the place, selected me for one of its victims, my recent attack of measles predisposing me, it may be, for the malady. I remember trying to shake it off for a day or two, vainly trying to fight against the peculiar lassitude with which the attack commenced, and then having to give in and take to my bed. How miserable I was! With all the feelings of over-fatigue, yet unable to lie still; thirsty in the extreme, yet unable to swallow anyone of the varied beverages that they brought me; what was still worse, unable to sleep, A sense of drowsiness would come over me, but no sooner had I yielded to it than all sorts of of hideous visions would present themselves to my disordered brain that quickly scared me back to wakefulness. Yet I was too weak to resist this delusive slumber. I would strain every nerve to keep my eyes wide open, but the eyelids would grow heavy and sleep would overcome me—instantaneous sleep only, for scarce would I have closed my eyes before I was awake again, uttering as I returned to consciousness, a cry of terror. At times, too, I was delirious, rambling incoherently, mixing up places and people in a manner that, at other times, would have amused those that heard me, or else I would shriek out for protection from the malignant priest, who appeared as my chief persecutor.

I had now lain ill nine days, rarely answering if spoken to, and not recognizing those in attendance upon me, when I fell into a deep sleep that lasted several hours. My mother, worn out with constant watching, was resting on a couch close by, while Theophile stood, as it were, keeping guard at my bedside, on the look-out for any change that might come over me, when I awoke and the eyes that first met mine were the bright eyes of my fair watcher—Theophile. Yes, there was that sweet face, recognized now by me for the first time for many days; and languid as I was, I recollect well mustering just sufficient energy to say in a whisper, 'Theophile!' From that moment I began to rally. The malady had run a certain course, and the crisis was past. Signs of returning appetite began to show themselves, and my slumbers forthwith ceased to be disturbed with the terrors that had been wont to haunt them. The doctor, however, who, by the way, treated my case most skillfully, warned my friends that I should need great care, and that any injudicious exertion might cause a rélapse that would probably prove fatal. So I had to make up my mind to a short season of convalescence, and to be treated still as an invalid while strength gradually returned. The contemplated trip to Switzerland had been interfered with; but now that I was getting better it was talked about afresh, and it was decided we should start for Basle as soon as I should appear equal to the journey. My uncle, who arrived soon after I was first taken ill, was disposed to take blame to himself for having caused our detention at Colmar, but for which, perhaps, I should have escaped this attack of fever. It was still, however, July, and so plenty of the summer remained for carrying out our projected excursion.

Truth to tell, I was by no means eager for the time of our leaving to arrive. The interim of my convalescence was pleasant enough, Theophile being to some extent my attendant as well as companion. Her piano-playing I found more grateful than ever, and then by way of variety she would take up an English book, and read or attempt to read it with the sole object, I believe, of amusing me with her pronunciation of the language. Many soft sentiments passed, too, between us; more it may be than were suspected, or would have been quite approved by others. That we liked each other was no secret, but the depth of the attachment which had sprung up between us was hardly realized by my relatives. But this pleasant time was not to last. At the expiration of three weeks—from the time when my illness took a favorable turn, I was pronounced by the doctor quite well enough to take an easy journey, and indeed he recommended my removal without delay. So the day came for us to take leave of Colmar and the Bertrands. I shall never forget that day. I felt the parting terribly. My father and uncle had started on foot for the station, while my mother and I were to follow in the fly which was waiting at the door. Adieu, Theophile!' was all I could trust myself to say, but I made bold in saying so to salute, after the manner of the country, the cheek of this sweet French girl, while with a moistened eye and a perceptible tremor in the voice, she faintly replied, 'Au revoir!' and, we drove away. Was I ever to see Theophile again?

We traveled as far as Basle that day, and from thence we started the following morning on a two months' tour through a country justly termed the playground of Europe, presenting, as it does, charms in the way of scenery, etc., which probably no other land under the sun has to offer, especially to those visiting it for the first time. Had we come direct to Switzerland, as we had at first intended, how delightful would this trip have been to me! But our detention at Colmar by the way, tended to modify considerably the enjoyment which it would otherwise have afforded me, and more than once was I asked somewhat reproachfully how it was I did not manifest more interest in all that was so new and so enchanting in the way of scenery. Berne, and Interlaken, and Lucerne, and Chamounix, and Geneva were all visited in turn, till October with its chill air overtaking us, it was decided that we should turn homeward, and seek the comfort of the English fireside.

For some days it had been matter of debate which route we should select for the return journey, and it had been resolved that we should take the rail direct to Paris, and there expend the residue of loose cash our party happened to retain. But it so happened that my uncle, who was troubled with some ailment or other, had while at Colmar consulted the French *medecin* that attended me, and having been treated more skilfully by him than by others at home whom he had consulted, expressed a wish to see the man again. Out of consideration for us he proposed that we should go to Paris without him, while he went round by Colmar to meet us at the French capital. And I really think this suggestion of his would have been adopted but for me. The possibility of seeing Theophile once more—just once—had, I am afraid, something to do with it; but I ventured to give it as my opinion that it would be much better if we kept with Uncle George.

'At any rate let me go with him. He has been so kind to me.' I am sure he likes having me with him.'

'Yes; let him come with me,' chimed in my kind relative, pleased evidently at the reluctance I evinced to separate from him.

To this proposal my mother at first demurred on the ground that I had suffered enough already from my visit to Colmar, expressing at the same time surprise that I should not prefer avoiding all risk of another attack of fever. Her objections were, however, overruled. We were only to pass one night there. We were to put up at the hotel, not at the Bertrands', and I think something was said about not going near the house. So my uncle and I started for Colmar, leaving my father and mother to make their way to Paris.

It was about 3 in the afternoon when we alighted at the door of the hotel, the same that we had stopped at when we came in April, and my uncle having ordered dinner at 6, went in quest of his late medical adviser, leaving me to pass the interval as I thought proper, after bidding me to be careful to bear in mind the dinner-hour.

Not many more minutes than were necessary were consumed, as will be supposed, in making myself sufficiently tidy after our railway journey, for the visit which I had been promising myself for some days past; nor had many seconds, after my uncle had left the hotel, elapsed, ere I set out for Theophile's abode. How my heart throbbed at the prospect of meeting her! How would she receive me? Would she be the same to me—quite—as when I last saw her? And then—and this thought has troubled me much by the way—should I find her at home? I had not liked to write and tell her I was coming. I now half regretted I had not done so. However, I reached the house; the street-door, as usual, was open. I walked up stairs and knocked at the door of the sitting-room the family had been wont to occupy. Madame Bertnand was alone. She received me courteously, indeed, as ever; but she seemed much depressed about something, she did not say what, and congratulated me on having regained my good looks, observing that I had apparently derived great benefit from my sojourn in Switzerland.

After sitting some time, and Theophile not appearing, I could restrain myself no longer and asked the question, 'How is Theophile?'

'Ah, monsieur,' she replied, giving vent to the feelings she had up to this moment repressed, and bursting into tears, 'Theophile n'est plus!'

What I felt on hearing this announcement I shall not attempt to describe; but I question whether a dagger thrust into my heart would have caused me greater anguish. We neither of us spoke for some minutes, both being overcome with emotion; but on recovering herself sufficiently, she told me how, shortly after we had left Colmar, her dearly loved daughter had been attacked with the same epidemic which so nearly laid me low, and after lingering some three weeks, sank under the attack.

'Oh, Madame!' exclaimed I, 'Is it possible I am no more to see Theophile? I loved Theophile!'

'Yes, Monsieur, I know it, and she loved you, too. Her last words to you I heard. They were "*Au revoir*;" but she's gone *au ciel*, to a fairer land than this, where God grant you may meet. Would Monsieur like to see the spot where my cherished one reposes now in peace? Then come with me.'

Before quitting the house, however, Madame Bertrand asked me whether I should like a small memento of her child.

'I should prize it dearly,' was my reply. During her illness the doctor had recommended that her hair should be cut off quite short, and her mother had kept it. She presented me with a lock which, as I took it from her hand, I pressed to my lips, and thanked her sincerely.

We walked together in silence to the burial-ground, whither all that was mortal of dear Theophile had been conveyed some six weeks before. A wreath of freshly gathered flowers lay upon the grave, while a plain white cross bearing the simple inscription,

'THEOPHILE BERTRAND,'

told briefly the tale of a comely flower prematurely stricken down, a choice bud that had withered and passed hence forever. After bidding Madame farewell, I made my way back to our hotel, feeling unutterably miserable, with a weight upon my heart which time, as it went on, scarce seemed to lighten.

It is twenty-five years since this incident occurred, and I am still single. I have sometimes mused to myself what might have been my course had I not paid Colmar a visit on our return journey, and never heard the story of Theophile's end. Perhaps my attachment to her might have abated, as such attachments formed in youth often do. As it is, however, the sweet memory of Theophile has, as yet, undergone no effacement.—*Temple Bar.*

The Suez Canal is expected to net this year a profit of $1,000,000. The tonnage passed through during the first three months comprises 313 ships against 260 in the year 1881, and the receipts have increased in like proportion. The Egyptian troubles thus far have no effect on the canal transportation. One effect is to hasten the substitution of steam for sailing vessels, as the latter cannot navigate the Red Sea.

Weights of Timber, Lumber, and Cordwood.

The following tables are given in a recent publication of H. K. Porter & Co., of Pittsburg, Pa.:

WEIGHT OF GREEN LOGS TO SCALE 1,000 FEET, BOARD MEASURE.

Yellow pine (Southern)	8,000	10,000 lb.
Norway pine (Michigan)	7,000	8,000 "
White pine (Mich.) off of stump	6,000	7,000 "
White pine (Mich.) out of water	7,000	8,000 "
White pine (Penn.) bark off	5,000	6,000 "
Hemlock (Penn.) bark off	6,000	7,000 "

WEIGHT OF 1,000 FEET OF LUMBER, BOARD MEASURE.

Yellow or Norway pine Dry,	4,000 lb.	Green 5,000 lb.
White pine	2,500 "	" 4,000 "

WEIGHT OF ONE CORD OF SEASONED WOOD, 128 CUBIC FEET PER CORD.

Hickory or sugar maple	4,500 lb.
White oak	3,750 "
Beech, red oak, or black oak	3,250 "
Popular, chestnut or elm	2,350 "
Pine (white or Norway)	2,000 "
Hemlock bark, dry	2,200 "

(A cord bark got from 1,500 feet logs)

The jetted Jersey waists of black silk are very stylish for completing black satin mervelleux dresses that have many lengthwise tucks and pleated flounces.

Rev. J. R. Murphey, D. D., has accepted an appointment as financial secretary of the college at Des Moines, Iowa.

The production in this country of pig iron, in 1881, was 4,641,564 tons, against 4,295,414 tons in 1880.

For indulging in the trifling luxury of leaving the coal-hole in his sidewalk open one night, a New York man was made to pay $10,000 and a lawyer to defend a suit brought by a man with an amputated leg.

The application of Charles Tong Sing, the Chinese steward of the Jeannette, who accompanied Lieutenant Danenhower home from Siberia for discharge from the United States service, was granted. He will go to China to visit his mother.

Within a radius of five miles from a place on the Skagit, Washington territory, there is estimated to be at least 200,000,000 feet of fir saw timber, exclusive of the maple, spruce and cedar

"Crushed-strawberry" red and raspberry pink are the fashionable colors for the gingham dresses worn by brunettes. They are trimmed with white embroidered muslin.